/212 cont./

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Omsk Kirghiz /Kazak/. A Kirghiz /Kazak/ woman milking a mare. (From a photograph by Bebenin.)

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252 Millet is the most widespread of the grain foods and is eaten either somewhat browned (and then eaten directly) or in the form of kasha. "Baursaki," an unleavened dough, is made with flour, cut into small pieces, and fried in sheep fat (it tastes like the Mardi-Gras nuts of the Russians). "Balamyk" is a watery dish made of flour, millet fried in fat and water, and cooked in the kazan. "Kaurdak" is pieces of roasted meat from various parts of an animal, of which the kidneys are considered
[574] especially tasty. As a sign of special attention and graciousness to a guest, the host himself puts pieces of kaurdak into the guest's mouth (1). This is called eating "bish'-barman"

1. Apparently the Russian word "kavardak" /mishmash/ comes from this.

262 (five fingers). Kumiss, baursaki, and kaurdak make up the main food of the Kirghiz /Kazak/ and their favorite food, especially kumiss, which is at the same time considered just as sacred as
262 bread is among the peasants. One can judge how much the
272 Kirghiz /Kazak/ love kumiss by the fact that there is retail
275 selling of kumiss, as of vodka among Russians (the so-called
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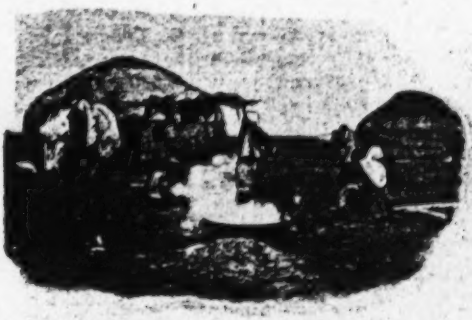
/212 cont./
"kumiss pubs" /kumysnye kabachki/). In Akmolinsk, Uralsk, and other steppe towns populated in part by Kirghiz /Kazak/, there are several such kumiss vending places, where it is possible to obtain a large cup (3-4 times the size of a teacup) of good kumiss for 2-3 kopeks.

The nourishing and stimulating qualities of kumiss are well-known /213/ also to the local Russian population, not to speak of the patients visiting the healing places (Borovoye, Shchuch'e, Bayan-Aul, Ul'binskoye, and others) and summer houses, who drink kumiss on the advice of their doctors. The Russian population of the surrounding towns drink a great quantity of it in summer, for example, in Omsk, where in this season incoming Kirghiz /Kazak/ open a trade in kumiss (30-50 kopeks per chetvert). The Kirghiz /Kazak/ make an intoxicating beverage called "araka" from kumiss (by distillation), but it does not yet have a wide distribution. The Kirghiz /Kazak/ also like to drink tea with sugar, especially brick tea. They do not drink vodka and wine. Russian baked bread is customary among the Kirghiz /Kazak/ near towns.

It was said above that the main occupation of the Kirghiz /Kazak/, being a nomadic people, is livestock raising, but in recent times agriculture has also begun to spread. Here we shall only discuss the domestic occupations of the Kirghiz /Kazak/.



A Kirghiz /Kazak/ nomad village near Omsk. (From a photograph by Bebenin.)